

men, of the Christian means as administered by those who implore and rely upon this special agency of heaven, and by those who deny any such operation on the mind; deny it in sense and substance, whatever accommodating phrases they may sometimes employ. Has there indeed been any success at all, in that great business of conversion, to vindicate the calculations of this latter class from the imputation of all the vainest folly that should be meant by the word Romantic?

But, when I introduced the mention of reformers and their projects, I was not intending any reference to delusive presumptions of the operations of Christianity, but to those speculations and schemes for the amendment of mankind which anticipate their effect independently of its assistance; some of them perhaps silently coinciding with several of its principles, while others expressly disclaim them. Unless these schemes bring with them, like spirits from heaven, an intrinsic competence to the great operation, without requiring to be met or aided by forwardness in the nature of the Subject, it may be predicted they will turn to the mortification of their fond projectors. There is no avoiding the ungracious perception, in surveying the general character of the race, that, after some allowance for what is called natural affection, and for compassionate sympathy, (an excellent principle, but extremely limited and often capricious in its operation,) the main strength of human feelings consists in the love of sensual gratification, of trifling amusement, of distinction, of power, and of money. And by what suicidal inconsistency are these principles to lend their force to accomplish the schemes of pure reason and virtue, which, they will not fail to perceive, are plotting against them?# And if *they* have far too perfect an instinct to be trepanned into such an employment of their force, and yet are the preponderating agents in the human heart, what *other* active principles of it can the renovator of human character call to his effectual aid, against the evils which are accumulated and defended by what is at once the baser and the stronger

* I am here reminded of the Spanish story, of a village where the devil, having made the people excessively wicked, was punished by being corn-pelled to assume the appearance and habit of a friar, and to preach so eloquently, in spite of his internal repugnance and rage, that the inhabitants were completely reformed.